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7 April 1958

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# CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN



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7 April 1958

## DAILY BRIEF

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[redacted]

### I. THE COMMUNIST BLOC

USSR--summit tactics: The USSR will probably accept the Western proposal of 31 March to hold pre-summit preparatory talks in Moscow at the end of April.

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no

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*yes*  
Khrushchev's letters: Premier Khrushchev's letters of 4 April to President Eisenhower and Prime Minister Macmillan were intended to increase the impact of the USSR's unilateral suspension of nuclear tests and to initiate a public exchange between the three heads of government on this issue. Aside from officially informing the United States that the effective date of the Soviet suspension is 31 March, the letter to the President simply summarized Foreign Minister Gromyko's speech and the Supreme Soviet resolution of 31 March on the USSR's decision to suspend tests. [redacted]

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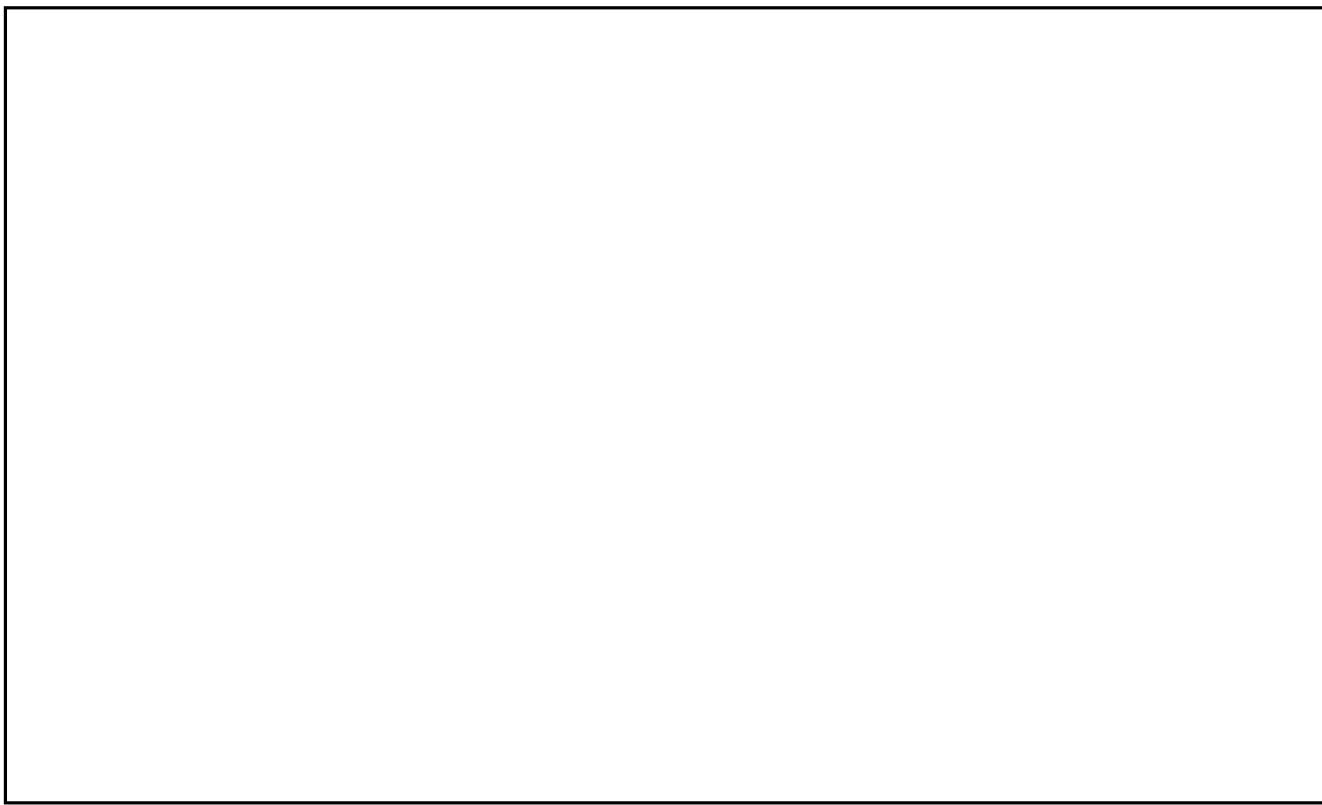
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[redacted]

II. ASIA-AFRICA

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III. THE WEST

*No*  
Cuba: Batista's hold on power will be secure as long as the armed forces continue to support him. There are dissident elements in the military, however, and growing demoralization among the troops. Sustained rebel harassment and growing popular demands for a peaceful solution could convince armed forces leaders that the easiest solution would be the removal of the President.

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*yes*  
Panama Canal: Attacks on United States rights in the Canal Zone are again being used by opponents of President de la Guardia to weaken and discredit the moderate and pro-American President. The latest thrust is a petition to the

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DAILY BRIEF

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Panamanian Government for oil and mineral exploration rights in the US-controlled Canal Zone. Denial of the petition would open De la Guardia to charges that he had betrayed his country's basic "rights." [redacted]  
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no

France: French dissident Communist leader Auguste Lecoeur accepted an invitation to meet De Gaulle on 3 April because of an alleged desire to impress upon the general the dangers of dealing with the present Soviet leadership. De Gaulle characterized Soviet Ambassador Vinogradov's recent visits to him as an effort to "soften him up" and said he told Vinogradov that he feels the USSR is behind France's difficulties in Algeria. [redacted]

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yes

Netherlands: A long-smoldering struggle for power in the Communist party has now come to a head with the expulsion of four prominent members--including the chairman--and the demotion of a fifth. The new crisis follows the party's steady postwar decline in strength and prestige, and a further loss of votes in the nationwide provincial elections last month. [redacted] (Page 4)

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[redacted]  
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### III. THE WEST

#### New Move Against Panama's President

The opposition has made a new thrust designed to embarrass pro-United States President de la Guardia on the controversial issue of sovereignty over the Panama Canal Zone. Ramon Gamboa, a member of the opposition Liberal party, has petitioned the Panamanian Government for oil and mineral exploration rights in the Canal Zone. He backs up the petition with the familiar nationalistic claims that Panama never relinquished sovereignty in the zone and that US rights there are limited to those necessary for the operation, maintenance, defense, and sanitation of the canal. He also notes that existing treaties make no provision for subsoil exploitation. If De la Guardia rejects the petition, his opponents will accuse him of betraying his country's rights and aspirations.

De la Guardia's opponents are led by powerful and wealthy families of the oligarchy who are fighting to maintain and expand their control over the sources of political and economic power. They have found that exploitation of the nationalistic issue of Panama's "rights" to some control of and greater benefits from canal operations not only hits De la Guardia at a vulnerable point, but also gives them common cause with other population groups. The thousands of slum dwellers in Panama's two largest cities already tend to blame their poverty and Panama's critical economic problems on US control of the canal.

The 1903 treaty with Panama granted the US in perpetuity "all the rights, power, and authority" in the Canal Zone which the US would have "if it were the sovereign" there. There are no proven petroleum deposits either in the zone or in Panama.   25X1A

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Netherland Communist Party Crisis

The Netherlands Communist party is in danger of disintegrating as a result of a bitter struggle for leadership. The conflict came to a head on 5 April with the expulsion of four prominent party members--including the chairman--and the demotion of a fifth. Four of the five are members of the seven-man Communist delegation in the lower house of parliament.

Secretary General Paul De Groot has accused his opponents in the party of attempting to seize control with a "rightist bourgeois" policy, but the real issue is over trade union policy. De Groot has been pressing for dissolution of the party's trade union affiliate (EVC) and for Communist infiltration into other unions, but he has been facing strong resistance from the EVC leaders, who would thus lose their jobs and who have long resented his dictation.

De Groot seems to have overcome this increasingly formidable opposition for the time being at least, but the struggle will cost the Communists still further loss of prestige. The party is estimated to have fallen to a post-war low of some 18,000 members and, in the provincial elections last month, polled only slightly more than 4 percent of the vote. 25X1A

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